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USSR

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SUSPECTED DUPLICITY OF "JUAN" (1944)

From: MEXICO CITY

To: MOSCOW

Nos: 553-554

29 June 44

[Two-part message complete]

Part I] To VIKTOR.[1]

Further to our report No. 2 on the GNOME[GNCM][11] project, we report the following about JUAN[KHUA]:[111]

As was to be expected, our measures to eliminate superfluous go-betweens, and the fact that ANTON[14] has gone over to direct liaison with the people who are to do the job, aroused dissatisfaction and opposition on JUAN's part. Seeing that from the time of our arrival the project has been tackled more energetically and has been firmly directed, he realized that he could not continue in the role of leader and that he was losing a source of easy money. The facts set out below finally expose J.[15] as an adventurer and a thief. Wishing to take advantage of his remaining opportunities and being suspicious of the measures which we are carrying out parallel [to his own][a], he is trying to get at the real significance of these measures (this cannot be explained away as pure curiosity) and is pursuing the following course:

1. He demanded 1,700 pesos from us for the repair of a motor[b]

[24 groups unrecoverable]

the possibility of our sending a man to VERACRUZ to check that the vessel is there. J. states that it has gone for refit to HONDURAS, which is pure invention, as the facilities for refitting are considerably better in V.[16]

Distribution

[Continued overleaf]

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2. Then he informed us that there was a chance of [C% processing][C% OFORMLENTIE] two more HOSPITAL supervisors [vii]

[26 groups unrecoverable]

after a month J. demanded 7,500 pesos for this purpose, which we refused him on the grounds that such an arrangement would at once cause suspicion, since anyone trying to obtain a post at a salary of 150 pesos a month, could not afford a bribe of 7,500 pesos. Thereupon J. lowered the sum to 3,500, and when we did not agree to that either - he asked for just 1,500.

3. In January he received from us several repeat several thousand [pesos][a] for the purchase of a second lorry supposedly for WOLF's [VOLK][viii] group. Recently WOLF reported that he had not received any second lorry and knew about the first one only from what J. had said.

4. J. then stated that the two cars he had had broken down. We commissioned him to sell them, with a view to buying new ones and putting them in more reliable hands. J. stated that it was impossible to sell them but did not explain why. He hinted that he had sold them himself long ago.

5. J. took 2,500 pesos from us for arranging HARRY's [GARRI][ix] documents, and then he returned the old documents without having done anything.

A second element in J.'s behaviour is more serious:

1. Recently LUKA's [x] presence

[42 groups unrecoverable]

of him [c] also and that it is carried out by the POLECATS [KHOR'KI][xi]. In order to organise this business J. received another 500 pesos. Soon both reported that surveillance had ceased and that it was organised by [C% the Americans], but still later J. stated that it was the work of the Mexican police. I am inclined to think that the surveillance was a guard placed on HARRY at his own request by J., as HARRY [3 groups unrecovered] and might assume that meetings at night with LUKA might not [3 groups unrecovered].

[Part II]

During the course of the last few weeks ANTON has observed very clumsy surveillance of himself by three Mexicans with a car. On one occasion he approached one of them and struck up a derisive conversation. The intelligence agent [RAZVEDCHIK] was very embarrassed and tried awkwardly to justify himself. ANTON demanded that J. send one of the cars to his house in order to observe and identify the people and car carrying out surveillance of him. Despite all promises J. did not send any car.

3. J. continually fails to appear at pre-arranged meetings, which compelled ANTON to go one night to his house. At J.'s house ANTON saw the car which was shadowing him, which, upon observing him, quickly disappeared. After this J. told ANTON an unsatisfactory tale which he had thought up to the effect that his driver was supposed to have succeeded in getting to know the driver of the car carrying out surveillance of ANTON and that this [driver][a] had stated that he belonged to the police of the town of PUEBLA. From this, one is supposed to draw the conclusion [B, that] [D% the surveillance] is being carried out, not by the POLECATS, Americans or Mexicans, as he had said earlier, but by the men of Maximiro AVILA CAMACHO (the brother of the President) who is notorious for his arbitrary actions, gangster raids, kidnapping people in the street and so forth. This version is intended to frighten us.

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All this goes to show very convincingly that the surveillance was organised by J. himself because the GNOME project is slipping from his grasp. We are faced with the task of determining exactly what J.'s motives are - mere curiosity or the more serious reasons which we set out in the first report. At the moment the only support for the latter is as follows:

J. is the right-hand man of "TEXAS[TEKSAS]"[xii] - the Editor-in-Chief of "Sh...'"[xiii] newspaper. I wrote in detail about TEXAS in my letters

[19 groups unrecoverable]

is a collection of all kinds of political adventurers and also open and secret POLECATS. Through carelessness on the part of Sh... and MAKSEM[xiv], T.[xv] has been put in the picture about the work of our illegal, "ADA"[xvi]. Moreover J. is closely linked with the leaders of the opposition here, which is excluded from the Communist Party of MEXICO. This gives rise to the supposition that he is connected with elements which are hostile to us and that he is acting in their interests. The difficulties are greatly increased by the fact that J. is a trusted member of our apparatus. [C% The forthcoming] hand-over of the project to higher authority and the start which has been made on setting up a new, parallel apparatus, consisting for the time being of "INVENTION[IZOBRETIENIE]"[xvii] and "LATA"[xviii], give us time to manoeuvre with J., making it seem that, for the sake of his own personal safety, we are switching him to work on general political intelligence. [3 groups unrecovered] [D% routine] orientation with regard to [C% the situation].

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YURLJ[xix]

- Notes: [a] Inserted by translator.
 [b] The fact that an adjectival form is used in the Russian suggests that this was probably a motor-boat. This receives some confirmation from the mention, very shortly afterwards, of refitting a vessel.
 [c] The construction of the Russian sentence suggests that the word "surveillance" precedes "of him".

- Comments: [i] VIKTOR : Lt. Gen. P. M. FITIN.
 [ii] GNOME : Jacques MORNIARD.
 [iii] JUAN : Probably Juan GAYTAN GODOY.
 [iv] ANTON : Unidentified cover-name.
 [v] J. : I.e. JUAN.
 [vi] V. : I.e. VERACRUZ.
 [vii] Hospital Supervisors : I.e. prison warders. 'Hospital' is used as a cover-name for prison.
 [viii] WOLF : Probably Rosendo GOMEZ LORENZO, editor of magazine "Tiempo".
 [ix] HARRY : Jacob EPSTEIN.
 [x] LUKA : Pavel P. KLARIN, 2nd Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in MEXICO CITY from November 1943 to May 1944.
 [xi] POLECATS : Trotskyites.
 [xii] TEXAS : Possibly Alejandro CARRILLO MARCO.
 [xiii] Sh... : Vicente LOMBARDO TOLEDANO.
 [xiv] MAKSEM : Vasilij Mikhajlovich ZUBILIN, 2nd Secretary at the Soviet Embassy in WASHINGTON.
 [xv] T. : I.e. TEXAS.
 [xvi] ADA : Kitty HARRIS.
 [xvii] INVENTION: Unidentified cover-name.
 [xviii] LATA : Dr. Esther CHAPA.
 [xix] YURLJ : Lev A. TARASOV, 1st Secretary at the Soviet Embassy in MEXICO CITY until December 1944.

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